FOOLKILLER
MARVEL
#5
BEMIS
TALAJIĆ
MARZAN JR.
MRVA
I'M A PSYCHIATRIST, I'M HERE TO HELP YOU!!!
THERAPY STICK
JOHNSON

MARVEL COMICS PROUDLY PRESENTS...

FOOLKILLER

Long ago, Greg Salinger was the Foolkiller, a vigilante targeting perpetrators of foolish crimes. He was one of Deadpool's Mercs for Money, but left to try a normal life as a psychologist treating former costumed criminals. He had some success—an apartment, a lovely girlfriend, Melanie—but Greg couldn't psychoanalyze so many fools without killing a few. While he wrestled with guilt, Kurt Gerhardt, the maniac who once took on the Foolkiller mantle when Greg was inactive, began sabotaging Greg's new life. His job and relationship ruined, Greg had no choice but to suit up and confront Kurt in the current hideout of Parker Robbins—the fallen super villain, Hood.

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YOU MAY THINK YOU'RE A HERO, BUT YOU'RE DON QUIXOTE.
I HAVE NO QUALMS WITH ADMITTING I'M MORE LIKE A DEADLY SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE THAN AN ANTIBIOTIC.
I HAVE A PURPOSE AS WELL, BUT YOURS IS OBVIOUS. IN THIS #@%$ SOCIETY, OBVIOUS ALWAYS COMES OUT ON TOP.
YOU MAY FIND A WAY TO WIN THE BATTLE.
BUT, LIKE CERTAIN STDs, KURT GERHARDT IS FOR LIFE. I WILL COME BACK.
I WAS BORN TO BE THE YIN TO YOUR YANG.
THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR HACKNEYED ATTEMPTS AT HEROIC PRETENSION MADE REAL.
THE--

WHAT THE @#$%...
I KNOW. HE JUST KEPT TALKING AND TALKING.
WHAT DID HE THINK I WAS GOING TO DO? JUST STAND HERE?
I MEAN, YEAH, I BACK IT...BUT NOBODY DOES THAT.
THEY USUALLY LET THE BAD GUY RAMBLE ON AND THEN HAVE A PROTRACTED BATTLE.
ISN'T HE YOUR... BIG BAD NEMESIS?
I THINK PEOPLE CONSIDER THIS KIND OF THING TO BE ANTICLIMACTIC.
ANTICLIMACTIC?

I THINK THIS IS A FAIRLY PIVOTAL MOMENT, HOOD.

I JUST HAVE TO KNOW...
WHY? WHY ME?
WHY HELP THAT PSYCHOPATH GERHARDT WRECK MY LIFE?
WELL, FIRST OF ALL, HE PAID ME A LOT OF MONEY.
CLCK
WHOA THERE, DAWG.
THAT WASN'T THE MAIN REASON. OBVIOUSLY.
I WANTED HIM TO FIND YOU SO I COULD WORK WITH YOU.
TALK.

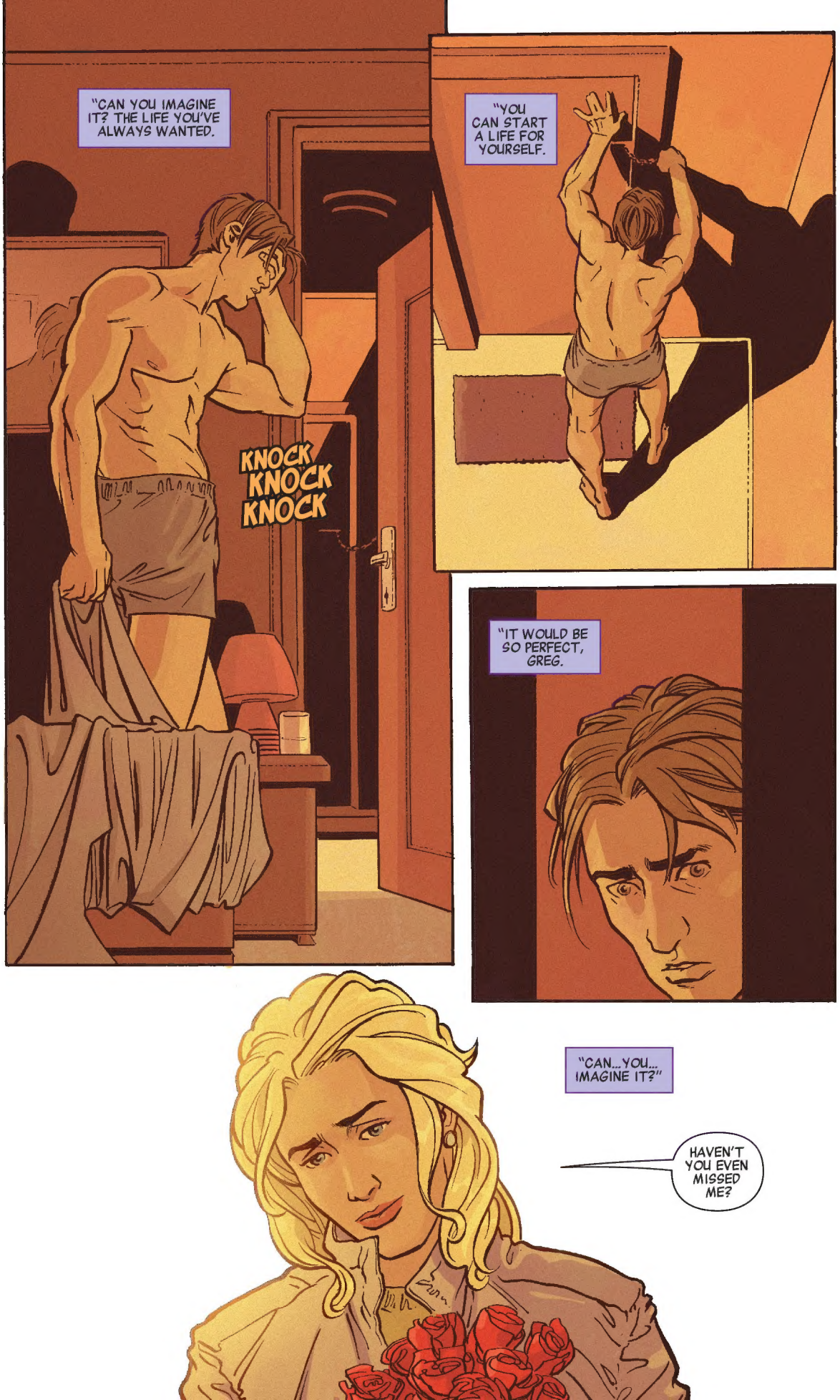
DID YOU KNOW I WAS THE NEXT BIG THING IN CRIME?
I WAS, LIKE, THE COOL, EDGILY MILLENNIAL WILSON FISK.
BUT TIME AND TIME AGAIN... I @%#$ IT UP.

THE AVENGERS KICKED MY %@#$.
THOR HAD HIS WAY WITH ME.
THE RED HULK EVEN HAD A TURN. NOT EVEN THE REAL HULK! DO YOU EVEN REMEMBER THE RED HULK? I DIDN'T THINK SO.
AND NOW MY TITULAR HOOD, THE SOURCE OF MY POWER, IS HEALING FROM BEING #@%$ UP PRETTY MUCH BEYOND REPAIR.

I'VE GOT MY CONTACTS, I'VE GOT SOME FEEBLE REAL ESTATE HOLDINGS AND A BUNCH OF ANONYMOUS HENCHMEN WHO OWE ME MONEY.
CLEARLY.
BUT I NEED AN ADVISOR. BECAUSE THERE'S SOMETHING IN ME THAT...SABOTAGES MY OWN VICTORIES.
CALL IT A SELF-DESTRUCTIVE STREAK.
OKAY, IT'S A "SELF-DESTRUCTIVE STREAK." WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

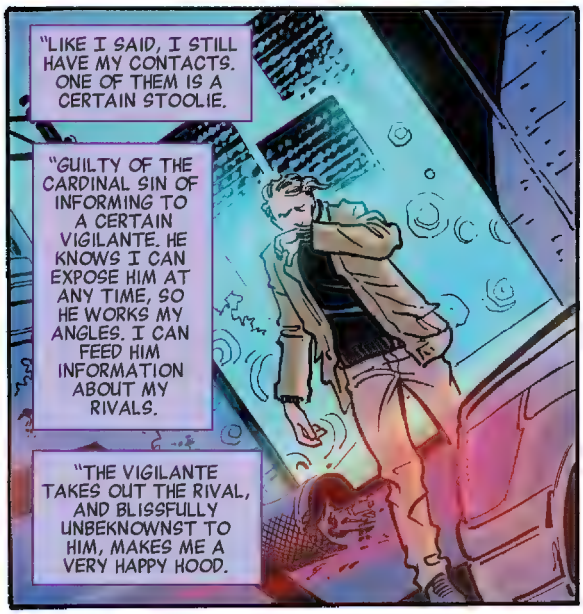
CAN YOU IMAGINE IT?
THE ULTIMATE VILLAIN-THERAPIST TO THE STARS.

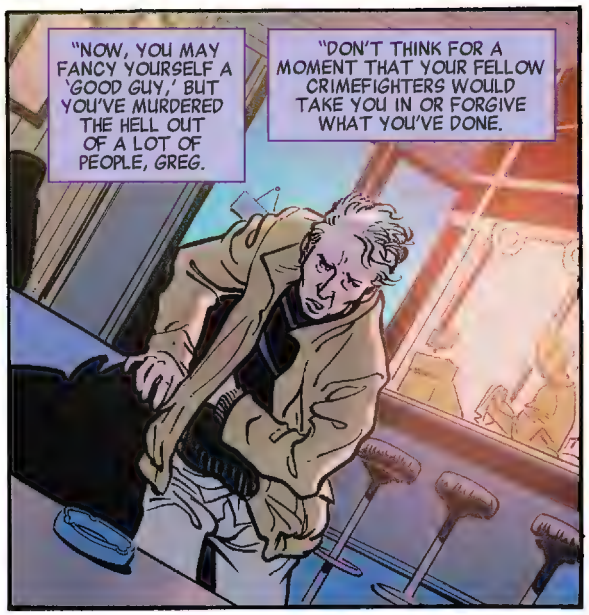
IMAGINE THAT THIS OLD CRAP PILE IS A SCARFACE-STYLE MANSION.
I WILL REGAIN MY STATUS, GREG. AND WHEN I DO... I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME TO THE TOP.
"WHO'S EVER HEARD OF A MAFIA GODFATHER HIRING A THERAPIST TO HELP HIM FUNCTION AT AN OPTIMAL LEVEL?
"I MEAN BESIDES IN THE SOPRANOS. AND IN ANALYZE THIS...
"...AND ITS LESS SUCCESSFUL SEQUEL, ANALYZE THAT.
"THE POINT IS, NOBODY DOES IT IN REAL LIFE."
"I SEE WHERE YOU'RE GOING WITH THIS, MR. ROBBINS. CONTINUE."
"AND HERE'S THE BRILLIANT PART. I'D BE WINNING BACK THE ENTIRE SUPER-VILLAIN CONTINGENCY, RIGHT?
"MY METAHUMAN MAFIA WILL REIGN OVER THE CITY. AND I'M GOING TO NEED MY SOLDIERS TO KEEP THEIR HEADS ON STRAIGHT.
"SO, YOU WORK YOUR MAGIC ON MY GENERALS AND LIEUTENANTS.
"AND SHOULD ONE OF THESE PEOPLE START TO GET TOO CRAZY FOR THEIR BRITCHES OR THINK ABOUT BETRAYING ME?
"YOU
"@#$%
"KILL THEM.

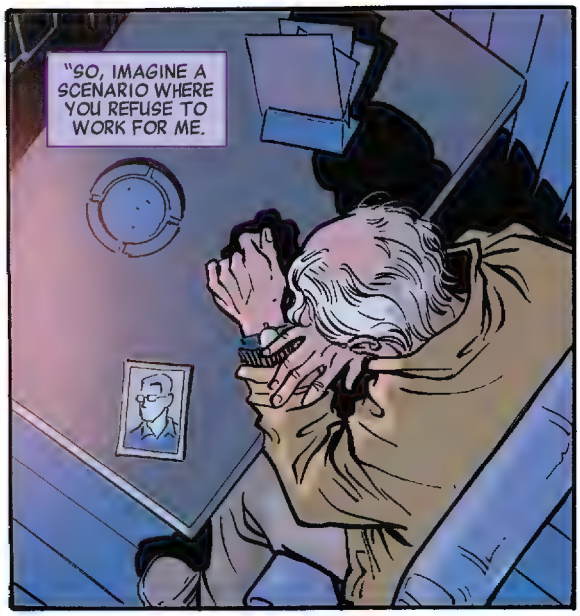

"CAN YOU IMAGINE IT? THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED.
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
"YOU CAN START A LIFE FOR YOURSELF.
"IT WOULD BE SO PERFECT, GREG.
"CAN...YOU... IMAGINE IT?"
HAVEN'T YOU EVEN MISSED ME?

YOU'RE SIMULTANEOUSLY RUBBING IN MY FAILURES AND TOTALLY LYING TO ME.
I'M NOT MESSING WITH YOU, GREG.
ALL OF THIS HAS BEEN ORCHESTRATED SO I COULD HAVE THE FIRST WELL-ADJUSTED CREW IN NEW YORK'S CRIMINAL HISTORY.
DEMENTED BUT POWERFUL BADDIES MINUS THE CRAZY COMPONENT EQUALS UNTOLD SUCCESS. WITH INSURANCE BUILT IN, COURTESY OF THE YOU-KNOW-WHO-KILLER.
...I GUESS THAT MAKES SENSE.
AND WHAT IF I'M DONE KILLING? DONE WORKING FOR SHADY, EGOMANIACAL JERKS WHO JUST WANT TO USE ME AS SOME KIND OF SICK WEAPON?
WELL, UNFORTUNATELY, GREG, YOU WOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO LIVE.

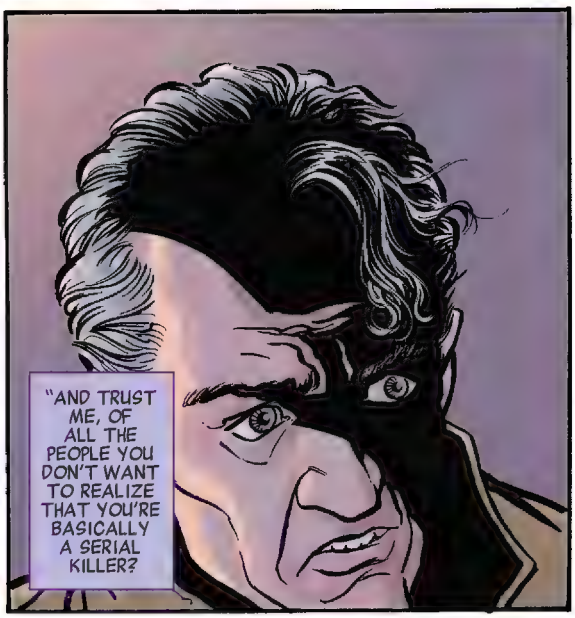
"SEE, YOU KNOW A BIT TOO MUCH ABOUT ME AND MY PLANS NOW, GREG. AND I REALLY, REALLY DISLIKE WHEN PEOPLE DON'T DO WHAT I TELL THEM TO DO.
Joe's
bar


"LIKE I SAID, I STILL HAVE MY CONTACTS. ONE OF THEM IS A CERTAIN STOOLIE.
"GUILTY OF THE CARDINAL SIN OF INFORMING TO A CERTAIN VIGILANTE. HE KNOWS I CAN EXPOSE HIM AT ANY TIME, SO HE WORKS MY ANGLES. I CAN FEED HIM INFORMATION ABOUT MY RIVALS.
"THE VIGILANTE TAKES OUT THE RIVAL, AND BLISSFULLY UNBEKNOWNST TO HIM, MAKES ME A VERY HAPPY HOOD.


"NOW, YOU MAY FANCY YOURSELF A 'GOOD GUY,' BUT YOU'VE MURDERED THE HELL OUT OF A LOT OF PEOPLE, GREG.
"DON'T THINK FOR A MOMENT THAT YOUR FELLOW CRIMEFIGHTERS WOULD TAKE YOU IN OR FORGIVE WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

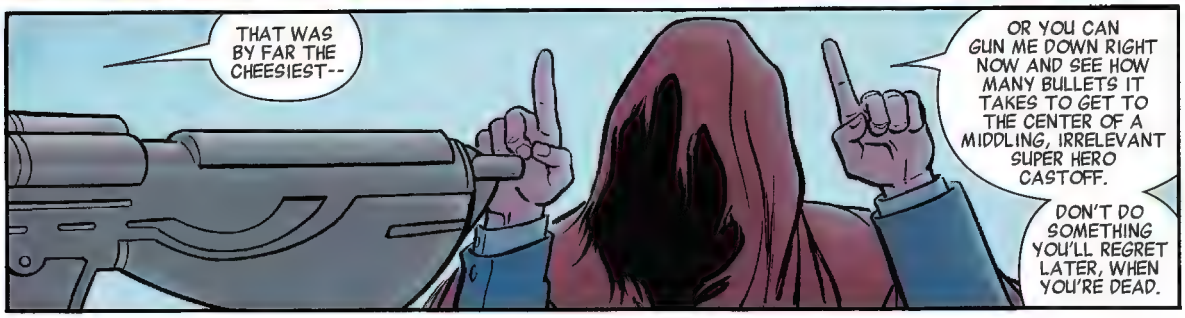

"SO, IMAGINE A SCENARIO WHERE YOU REFUSE TO WORK FOR ME.

"YOUR IDENTITY AND LOCATION GOES INTO THE HANDS OF THE STOOLIE.
"BY THAT EVENING, HE'S ARRANGED A MEET.


"AND TRUST ME, OF ALL THE PEOPLE YOU DON'T WANT TO REALIZE THAT YOU'RE BASICALLY A SERIAL KILLER?

"FRANK CASTLE SHOULD BE FIRST ON YOUR LIST.
"HE WILL FIND YOU. WHEREVER YOU ARE. IN THE GUTTERS, UNDERGROUND, EVEN BEHIND BARS.
"I KNOW IT'S SLIGHTLY HYPOCRITICAL THAT HE WOULD PASS JUDGMENT ON YOUR CURRENT WORK, BUT YOU ALSO HAVE A HISTORY OF THUGGERY AND MURDER THAT'S LESS...PURPOSEFUL."

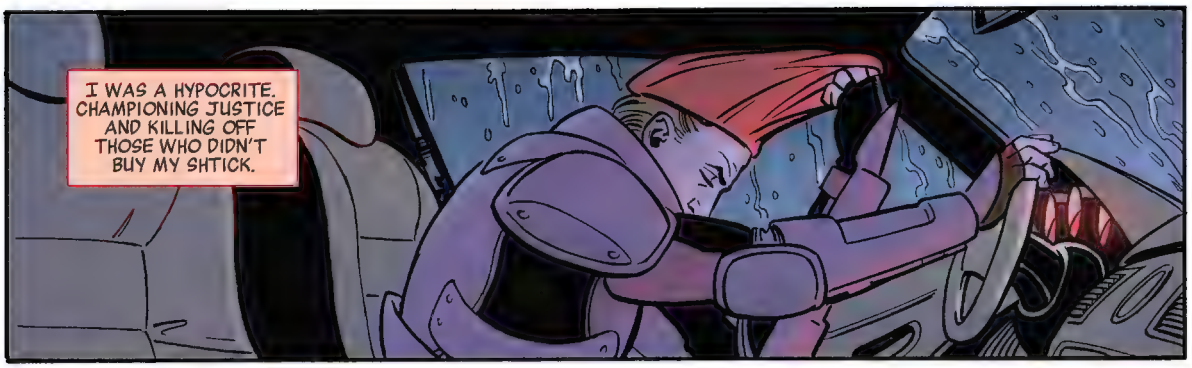
DEAR GOD. YOU...YOU OWN ME.
THAT'S RIGHT, HOMES. IT'S MY WAY OR ROUTE 187 VIA THE CASTLE EXPRESSWAY.

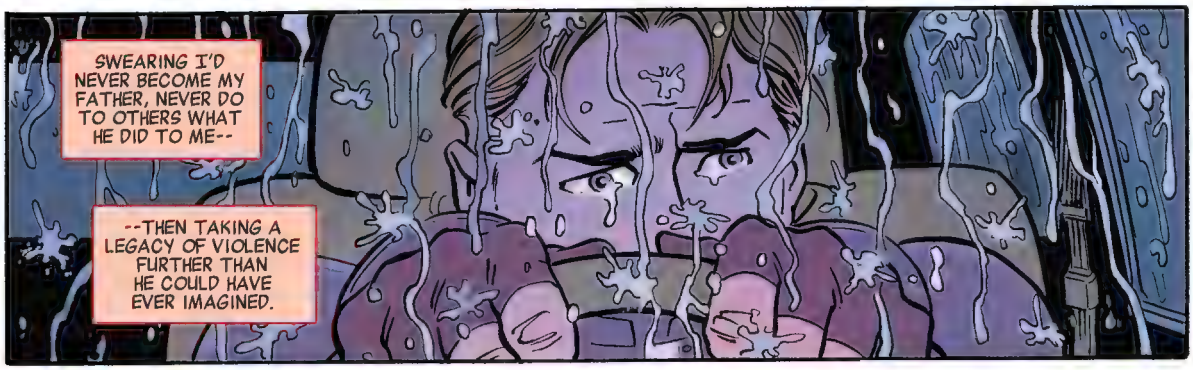

THAT WAS BY FAR THE CHEESIEST--
OR YOU CAN GUN ME DOWN RIGHT NOW AND SEE HOW MANY BULLETS IT TAKES TO GET TO THE CENTER OF A MIDDLING, IRRELEVANT SUPER HERO CASTOFF.
DON'T DO SOMETHING YOU'LL REGRET LATER, WHEN YOU'RE DEAD.

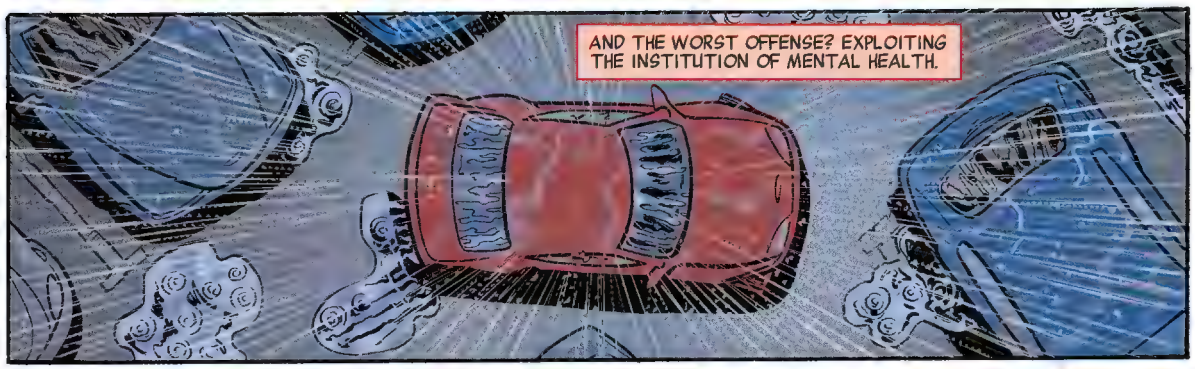
YOU'RE GIVING ME THE CHOICE TO EITHER LET EVERYTHING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT JUSTICE ROT AWAY, OR TO FACE THAT JUSTICE MYSELF.
NEVER HAD MUCH LUCK IN THIS LIFE, HOOD.
MAY NOT BE THE BRIGHTEST GUY IN THE WORLD, EITHER.

BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN A FOOL.
NO DEAL.

YOU JUST MADE THE WORST AND LAST DUMB MISTAKE OF YOUR LIFE, SALINGER!
I HOPE IT WAS WORTH IT WHEN YOU FACE THE MUSIC!

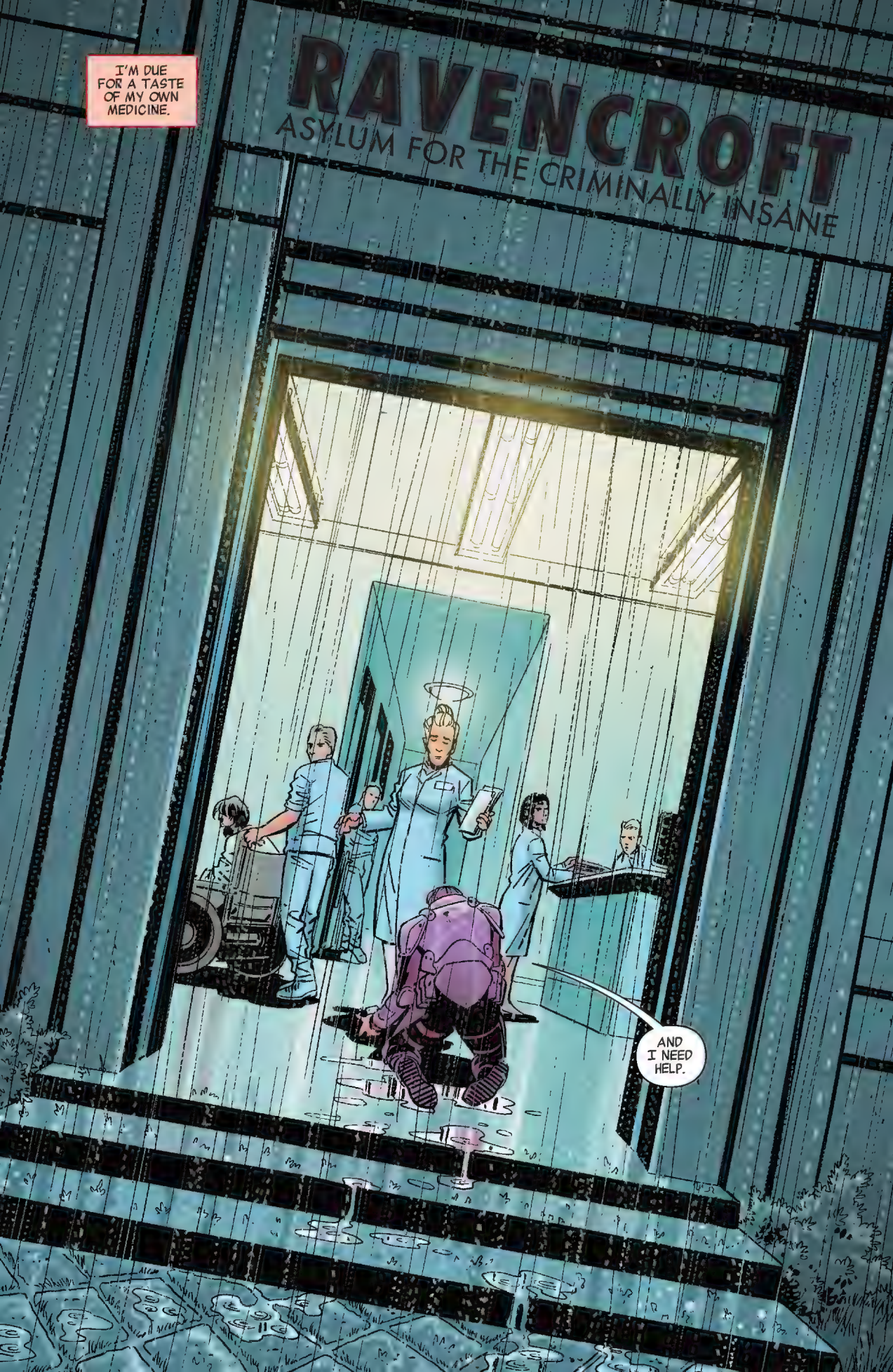

I WAS A HYPOCRITE. CHAMPIONING JUSTICE AND KILLING OFF THOSE WHO DIDN'T BUY MY SHTICK.

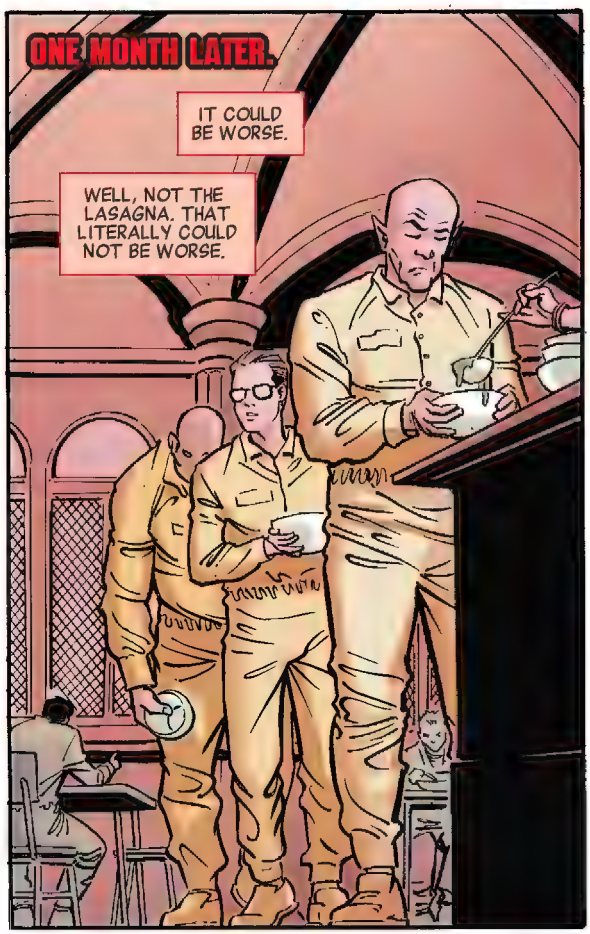

SWEARING I'D NEVER BECOME MY FATHER, NEVER DO TO OTHERS WHAT HE DID TO ME--
--THEN TAKING A LEGACY OF VIOLENCE FURTHER THAN HE COULD HAVE EVER IMAGINED.


AND THE WORST OFFENSE? EXPLOITING THE INSTITUTION OF MENTAL HEALTH.

SO, I'VE SEALED MY FATE. WHAT DO YOU THINK I'D WANT NOW?
TO MAYBE TAKE OUT A FEW FINAL BAD GUYS BEFORE CASTLE FINDS AND ENDS ME?

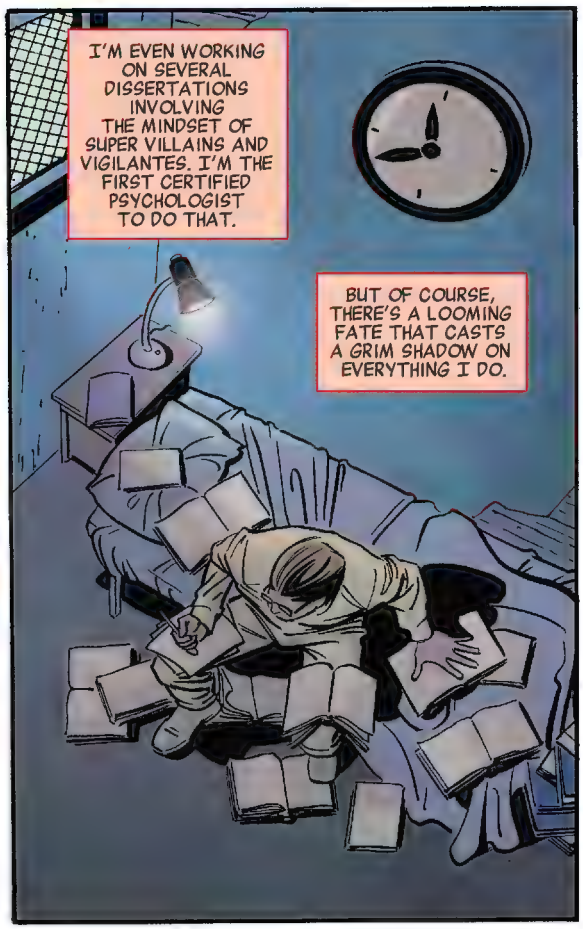
BUT I'M PAST THAT. I'M DONE.
EXCUSE ME? MY NAME IS GREGORY P. SALINGER.

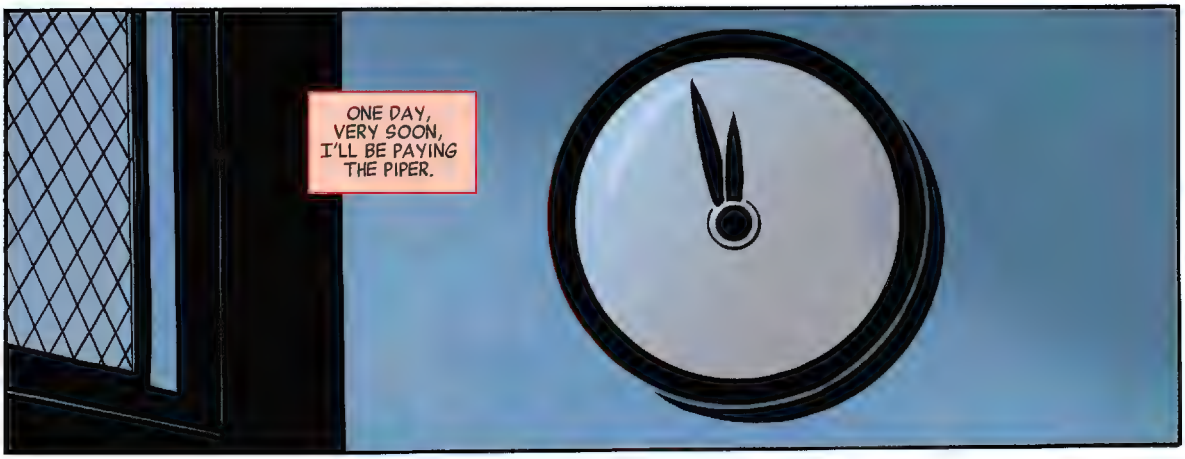

I'M DUE FOR A TASTE OF MY OWN MEDICINE.
RAVENCROFT
ASYLUM FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE
AND I NEED HELP.


ONE MONTH LATER.
IT COULD BE WORSE.
WELL, NOT THE LASAGNA. THAT LITERALLY COULD NOT BE WORSE.

I'M RELATABLE TO MY INMATES AND HELP THEM UNDERSTAND WHY BEING HERE, BEING REHABILITATED, IS SOMETHING WE NEED, NOT AN ACTUAL PUNISHMENT.
I'VE MANAGED TO TURN SEVERAL PEOPLE INTO WILLING, COMPASSIONATE PATIENTS INSTEAD OF CREEPY MEN WITH DAMPENED SUPER-POWERS ATTEMPTING TO BREAK OUT FOR THE FIFTEENTH TIME.
SEE, I'M BIPOLAR 1. MY MOOD FLUCTUATIONS AND HYPOMANIA ARE STRONGER THAN, SAY, JACKIE'S BIPOLAR 2.
I HAVE THE LESS-CRAZY VERSION? RAD.
AND I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE! NORMAN OSBORN, BULLSEYE...HECK, THEY EVEN HAVE BIPOLAR BAD GUYS IN COMIC BOOKS! LIKE THAT WEIRD PSYCHO CLOWN GUY WHO SHOOTS ACID OUT OF HIS LAPEL FLOWER!

THE STAFF HAS ACTUALLY LEARNED TO APPRECIATE MY INFLUENCE ON MY FELLOW PATIENTS.
THEY EVEN LET ME HAVE ONE-ON-ONE THERAPY SESSIONS WITH SOME OF THE MORE PROMISING CANDIDATES.
AHHHHHH...SO COLLECTING THE KNUCKLES OF MY VICTIMS WAS...
PARTIALLY AN EXTENSION OF OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER. PEOPLE WHO COLLECT OLD ACTION FIGURES AND RARE VINYL CAN HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM.
THINK OF EACH KNUCKLE AS AN OBSCURE MINOR THREAT 7".
BUT, LIKE, DISGUSTING.

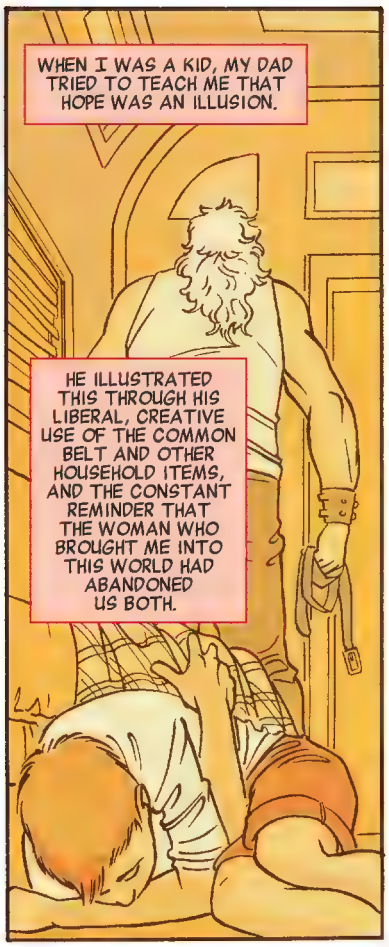

I'M EVEN WORKING ON SEVERAL DISSERTATIONS INVOLVING THE MINDSET OF SUPER VILLAINS AND VIGILANTES. I'M THE FIRST CERTIFIED PSYCHOLOGIST TO DO THAT.
BUT OF COURSE, THERE'S A LOOMING FATE THAT CASTS A GRIM SHADOW ON EVERYTHING I DO.


ONE DAY, VERY SOON, I'LL BE PAYING THE PIPER.

MY DEATH HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED TO ME BY MY ACTIONS, MY GENETIC MAKEUP, AND A SERIES OF SOCIAL CONDITIONS...

ALL OF WHICH HAS TAUGHT ME THAT, DESPITE MY FATE, LIFE ISN'T BLACK-AND-WHITE.

IT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME AS A BOY.


WHEN I WAS A KID, MY DAD TRIED TO TEACH ME THAT HOPE WAS AN ILLUSION.
HE ILLUSTRATED THIS THROUGH HIS LIBERAL, CREATIVE USE OF THE COMMON BELT AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, AND THE CONSTANT REMINDER THAT THE WOMAN WHO BROUGHT ME INTO THIS WORLD HAD ABANDONED US BOTH.

I FIGURED MY DAD LIVED WITHOUT ANY FEELINGS. AFTER ALL, HOW ELSE COULD HE DO WHAT HE DID TO HIS OWN SON? A CHILD?

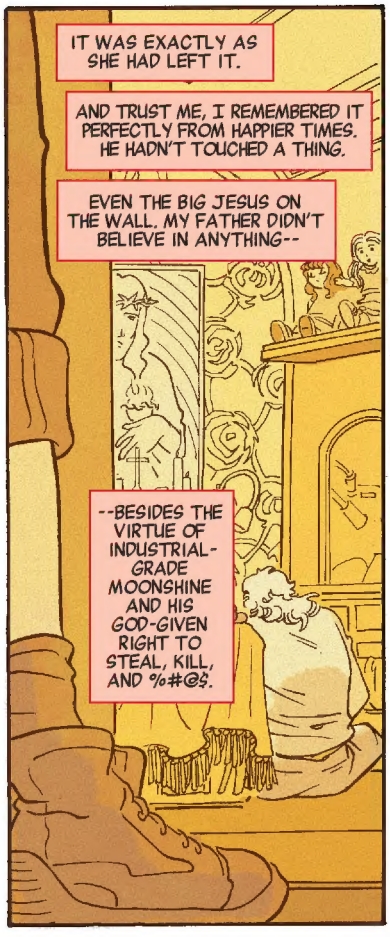
HE WAS A HARD MAN.
I NEVER HEARD MUSIC IN OUR TRAILER HOME UNLESS IT WAS SLAYER OR BLACK SABBATH.
HE WAS A HELLS ANGEL, A MAN WHO REGULARLY BURNED DOWN CHURCHES IN RACIST ACTS.

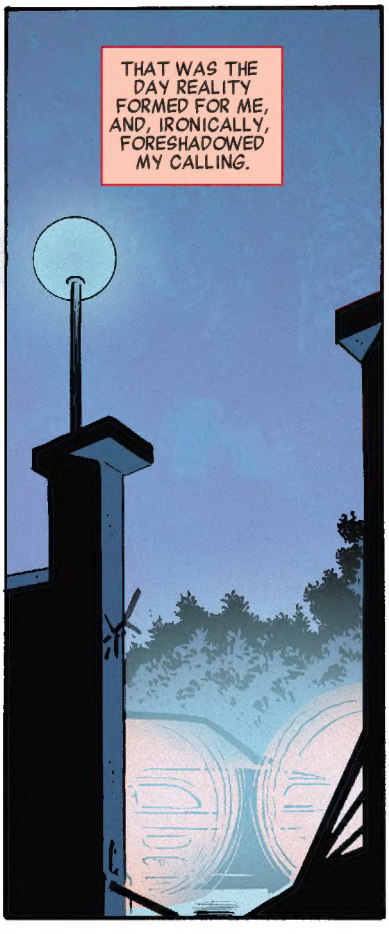
I DON'T KNOW WHAT COMPELLED ME TO SNOOP ON MY DAD THAT DAY.
WAS I FINALLY GOING TO TRY AND KILL HIM?
HELL, I'LL ADMIT...I DID EVENTUALLY.

BUT THAT DAY I WANTED TO KNOW IF THIS MAN FUNCTIONED OUTSIDE MY PERIPHERAL VISION.
WAS HE A REAL HUMAN BEING, RATHER THAN SOME SPECTER WHO APPEARED ONLY TO PUNISH, DESTROY, AND WOUND?

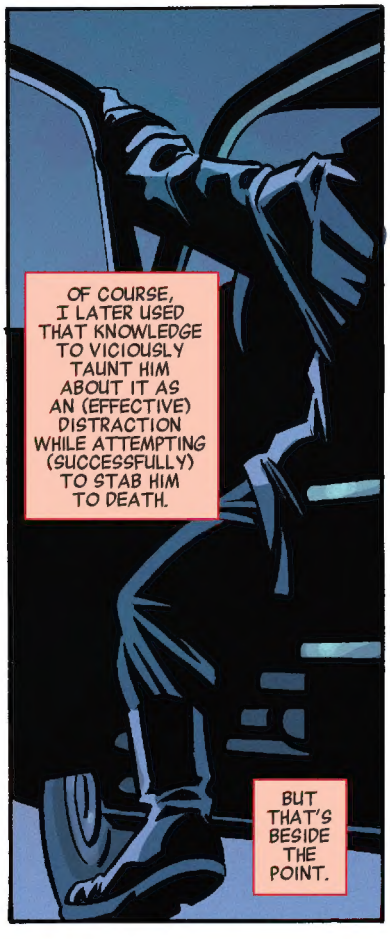
I HADN'T SEEN MY FATHER'S ROOM SINCE MY MOM LEFT.
I ASSUMED I'D FIND A DILAPIDATED DRUG DEN, PROBABLY PLASTERED WITH THE POSTERS OF TERRIBLE BLACK-METAL BANDS OR "ANGRY DE NIRO" FILM POSTERS.

BUT I HAD NO IDEA.


IT WAS EXACTLY AS SHE HAD LEFT IT.
AND TRUST ME, I REMEMBERED IT PERFECTLY FROM HAPPIER TIMES. HE HADN'T TOUCHED A THING.
EVEN THE BIG JESUS ON THE WALL. MY FATHER DIDN'T BELIEVE IN ANYTHING--
--BESIDES THE VIRTUE OF INDUSTRIAL-GRADE MOONSHINE AND HIS GOD-GIVEN RIGHT TO STEAL, KILL, AND %#@$.

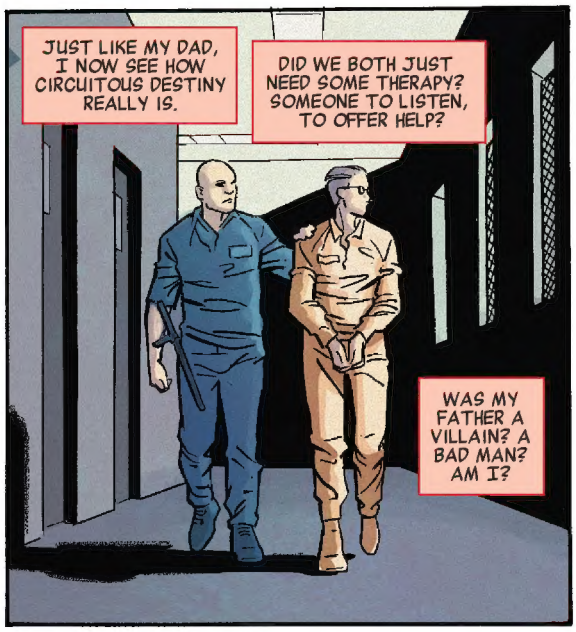

THAT WAS THE DAY REALITY FORMED FOR ME, AND, IRONICALLY, FORESHADOWED MY CALLING.

THE MAN WHO HITHERTO HAD BEEN MY DEVIL, THE BANE OF MY EXISTENCE, WAS JUST A PATHETIC, SAD PERSON... ACHING, STRIVING TO BE LOVED. JUST LIKE ME.
IT DIDN'T FOR A MOMENT EXCUSE HIS ACTIONS, BUT I COULD NO LONGER LOOK HIM IN THE EYE WITHOUT REALIZING EVEN BAD GUYS HAVE FEELINGS... NEUROSES... WEAKNESSES.


OF COURSE, I LATER USED THAT KNOWLEDGE TO VICIOUSLY TAUNT HIM ABOUT IT AS AN (EFFECTIVE) DISTRACTION WHILE ATTEMPTING (SUCCESSFULLY) TO STAB HIM TO DEATH.
BUT THAT'S BESIDE THE POINT.

SALINGER. YOU'VE GOT YOUR FIRST VISITOR TODAY.
I KNEW WHO THE VISITOR WOULD BE. I HAD MADE MY CHOICE WILLINGLY.

I HAD HURT AND KILLED LIVING, BREATHING PEOPLE, WHICH LED ME TO THE HOOD, WHICH HAS INEXORABLY LED ME TO THE PUNISHER, A MAN WHOSE ABILITY TO METE OUT JUSTICE MAKES MY EFFORTS LOOK LIKE COMMUNITY SERVICE.
AND NOW I'M FACING THE VERY VIGILANTE JUSTICE I LIVED TO DOLE OUT.
THAT'S...THAT'S WONDERFUL.


JUST LIKE MY DAD, I NOW SEE HOW CIRCUITOUS DESTINY REALLY IS.
DID WE BOTH JUST NEED SOME THERAPY? SOMEONE TO LISTEN, TO OFFER HELP?
WAS MY FATHER A VILLAIN? A BAD MAN? AM I?

THE REAL QUESTION IS THIS:
IF YOU'VE READ THIS FAR AND CAN RELATE TO MY STORY...
SHOULD BE HERE ANY SECOND, GREG.

WHO THE @#$% ARE YOU TO JUDGE?

DING DONG
YOU PEOPLE HAVE GOT TO BE THE MOST LOW-RENT HENCHMEN OF ALL TIME. ANSWER THE DAMN...
...DOOOOOORRRRRRRRR.
PARKER ROBBINS.
YOU SHOULD LEARN TO NEVER UNDERPAY A SNITCH.
THEY'RE LIABLE TO HOLD THAT AGAINST YOU.
...
@%#$.

YOU CAN DO THIS.
YOU CAN DO THIS...
YOU DESERVE THIS.

YOU CAN... OH, MY GOD.
HELLO.
OH, GREG...

...HAVEN'T YOU EVEN MISSED ME?
THE END.